

Application No.: 10/017,418

Attorney Docket No.: 10541-794

II. Remarks

Claims 9-13, 16, 17, and 40-45 presently stand rejected on the basis of prior art. By this paper, the Applicants are amending claim 40. No new matter has been added by this amendment. Reconsideration and further examination of claims 9-13, 16, 17, and 40-45 is respectfully requested.

Rejection of the Claims under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) – Part One

In the Office Action, claims 9-13, 16, 17, and 40-45 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,586,110 issued to Obeshaw (Obeshaw).

The Applicants respectfully submit the attached Declaration of the Inventors Under 37 C.F.R. §1.131, which evidences the conception and reduction to practice of the subject matter of claims 9-13, 16, 17, and 40-45 prior to November 1, 2000 (the filing date of the Obeshaw reference). The Applicants respectfully submit that Obeshaw is not prior art under 35 U.S.C. §102. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw these rejections under §102(e).

Rejection of the Claims under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) – Part Two

In the Office Action, claims 40 and 43 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,368,225 issued to Breese et al. (Breese).

The Applicants have amended claim 40 to include the limitations of dependant claim 44 and have cancelled claim 44. The Applicants assert that claim 40, as

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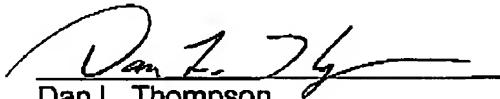
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amended, is allowable over Breese, and therefore, respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw these rejections under §102(e).

Conclusion

The Applicants assert that pending Claims 9-13, 16, 17, 40-43, and 45 are patentable. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner grant allowance of this application. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney for the Applicants via telephone if such communication would expedite this application.

Respectfully submitted,



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